# Covid-19 Risk Assessment – Chat-in-the-Park / People’s Assembly, etc.

## Protest Group: Freedom Tour

## Assessment carried out by: Laura Crameri who has consulted the HSE guidance on risk assessment, Regulation 3 and Schedule 1 of the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999, in the preparation of this risk assessment)

## Date assessment was carried out: 18 June 2021

**GENERAL GUIDANCE:**

1. If you have any of the following coronavirus symptoms:

* a high temperature
* a new, continuous cough
* a loss of, or change to, your sense of smell or taste

**STAY AT HOME AND ARRANGE TO HAVE A PCR TEST – SELF-ISOLATE FOR AT LEAST 10 DAYS FROM WHEN YOUR SYMPTOMS STARTED**

1. THERE ARE THREE SIMPLE ACTIONS WE MUST ALL DO TO KEEP ON PROTECTING EACH OTHER:

* **Wash hands –** keep washing your hands regularly
* **Cover face –** wear a face covering over your nose and mouth in enclosed spaces
* **Make space –** exercise caution and consider the risks - try to stay at least two metres apart – or 1 metre with a face covering or other precautions

**WHAT IS BEING ASSESSED?**

The Covid-19 specific risks associated with the Freedom Tour, Seaham Chat-In-The-Park, June 19th. This protest is coordinated by a political body where it is anticipated a gathering of more than 30 people will be present. The protest will be conducted outdoors. This risk assessment and the implementation of its control measures to minimise the risk of coronavirus transmission mean the protest is a permitted organised gathering as defined by Section 5(3) of The Health Protection (Coronavirus, Restrictions) (Steps) (England) Regulations 2021.

**INFORMATION ABOUT FREEDOM TOUR’S STRATEGY (FROM THE OFFICIAL WEBSITE)**

Our political leaders, dominant ideas and cultural limits are failing to rise to the challenge of our moment. We’re living through unprecedented times, times which call for new ways of thinking and being. The Freedom Tour is our answer to that call.

People across Britain are waking up to the reality of our situation; I’ve been sold a lie. My university degree won’t save me from rising sea levels. My 40 hour work week isn’t making me happy. The people I vote into power don’t give a shit about me.

The past 30 years have gutted this country of its political agency. Defeatism, distraction, division and despair act as walls between people and their own power. But in the wake of the pandemic, something new is building…

A generation of politicised young people - who rallied around Corbyn, Fridays For Future, and now Kill the Bill - long for a movement that can unite different struggles and create real change.

Make no mistake: we’re in for a summer of love, rage and resistance, and the revolution is coming. But to win, we need to engage a broad cross section of society. We need to crack open this budding revolutionary space and welcome everybody in. There are thousands of people out there who secretly dream of a better world (a 2015 poll found that 64% of Brits think that capitalism is unfair). We’re going to listen to their stories, and tell them ours.

Expectations have been set too low for too long. People do not believe in themselves or in others. We’re trapped inside small ideas of what it’s possible. It’s time that changes.

**PROTEST ACTIVITY DURING THE PERIOD WHEN HEALTH PROTECTION REGULATIONS ARE IN FORCE DUE TO THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC**

Protests during this period will be conducted entirely in the open air in spacious locations. This will enable participants and observers to practice effective physical distancing and other transmission risk minimisation measures.

Ideally, volunteers will be present, even at protests without a dedicated Covid-19 risk assessment, and they will be responsible for enabling compliance with the virus transmission minimisation measures set out in the assessment. If there are no dedicated volunteers present, all participants will take responsibility for adherence to the measures and controls set out in the assessment. This assessment will be available to protest attendees via a link on the social media broadcast channels being operated during the period.

This is a link to the full text of The Health Protection (Coronavirus, Restrictions) (Steps) (England) Regulations 2021: https://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2021/364/pdfs/uksi\_20210364\_en.pdf

This is a link to the College of Policing website’s guidance to Police Forces around Covid-19: https://www.college.police.uk/guidance/covid-19-restrictions

**PROTEST DESCRIPTION**

This protest takes the form of a chat in the park at the green next to the Tommy Statue in Seaham.

The protest will start at around 12.00pm and continue until approximately 4.00pm.

Approximate numbers: 100

We will do regular announcements during the event ensuring compliance with the virus transmission minimisation measures set out in the assessment. This risk assessment will also be immediately available for access by all attendees of the protest through the use of a link in the social media channels being used during the protest.

The protest is to be conducted in the open air in spacious locations that will enable participants and observers to practice effective physical distancing and/or other transmission risk minimisation measures.

**PRIOR TO, OR AT THE START OF, THE PROTEST, VOLUNTEERS WILL TAKE REASONABLE STEPS TO ENSURE THAT ALL PARTICIPANTS ARE AWARE OF THE NEED TO:**

* Wear a mask or face covering at all times, especially if you’re cheering, talking to people etc.
* Engage in social distancing by keeping a safe distance (2 metres or 1 metre with a face mask) from people not in your household wherever reasonably practicable.
* Avoid touching your eyes, mouth and nose. Sanitise your hands before touching your mask or removing your mask.
* Sanitise your hands regularly, avoid touching objects that aren’t your own and do not share any equipment.
* If you need to cough, cough in a tissue and dispose of it safely (bin or take with you in a bag)
* If you feel a particular area is becoming too crowded, please check your distance and move away from others.
* Parents and carers of children and young people need to help their children with understanding the importance of hand hygiene, and help them to regularly wash/sanitise.

| What are the hazards? | Who might be harmed and how? | What are you already doing to control the risks? | What further action do you need to take to control the risks? | Who needs to carry out the action? | When is the action needed by? | Done |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Person infected with Covid-19 attends a protest.**  This could include asymptomatic cases that have not self-isolated in accordance with current regulations. | The general public, participants, emergency services staff could contract the virus via direct or indirect exposure to Covid-19 (via respiratory droplets, aerosols or contact with contaminated surfaces) | Participants, prior to attendance, via social media messaging, are advised that if they are experiencing any Covid-19 symptoms they must NOT attend the protest. (SYMPTOMS: A new, continuous cough, a high temperature, and/or a loss of or change in their normal sense of smell or taste.)  Encourage participants to adhere to the Government’s general guidance as set out on page 1. | Preventing exposure to the virus is preferable to trying to deal with an exposure after it has happened. Therefore, measures to prevent attendance in the first place, by symptomatic participants, is the most appropriate control.  If parents/carers are accompanying children/young people to a protest, they should ensure the child/young person is not experiencing any Covid-19 symptoms. | Everyone – we are all crew!  Pre-protest communications folk.  Parents/carers | Ongoing |  |
| **Spread of Covid-19 to other people via the contaminated hands of a person at the protest.**  People attend the protest with hands contaminated with the virus. | Other participants, the general public or emergency service staff may contract the virus via indirect exposure to the virus, via the contaminated hands of another participant. | To reduce the risk of infection transmission via the contaminated hands of another person, participants are encouraged to follow handwashing/sanitising protocols prior to and during their attendance at the protest. Physical distancing will be promoted and encouraged.  Covid volunteers to monitor transmission minimisation measures and remind/help participants to adhere to them.  Covid volunteers to be mindful if there are young people on the protest, and engage with parents/carers to promote infection control measures.  Encourage participants to adhere to the Government’s general guidance as set out on page 1. | Encouraging regular handwashing/sanitising will reduce the risk of infection transmission via this route to a minimum.  Physical distancing will minimise the risk of infection transmission via other people’s hands.  Where leaflets or other information materials are to be handed directly to the public, hands should be regularly sanitised.  Parents and carers of children and young people (if present) to help their children with understanding the importance of hand hygiene, and help them to regularly wash/sanitise. | Everyone – we are all crew!  Steward volunteers to monitor transmission minimisation measures and remind/help participants to adhere to them  Parents/carers | Ongoing |  |
| **Spread of Covid-19 to other people via respiratory droplets and aerosols.**  Participants at the protest distribute respiratory droplets and aerosols by talking, coughing or sneezing. | Other participants, the public or emergency service staff may contract the virus via direct or indirect exposure to the virus, via contaminated respiratory droplets and aerosols from an infected person at the protest. | Participants are encouraged to wear a face covering.  Participants are encouraged not to touch their eyes, nose and mouth.  Participants who need to cough, sneeze or blow their nose are encouraged to use a tissue, which should then be disposed of safely (into a bag carried by the participant or a bin).  Parents/carers of young people (if present) to help their children to understand and practice respiratory hygiene.  Covid volunteers to monitor transmission minimisation measures and remind/help participants to adhere to them.  Encourage participants to adhere to the Government’s general guidance as set out on page 1 | If participants do not have tissues available, using the crook of their elbow to cough or sneeze into, is to be encouraged as an alternative measure.  Participants who wish to shout or sing should continue to wear a face covering, and be mindful of their physical distancing from other people.  Reinforcing respiratory hygiene messaging regularly will minimise the risk of infection via respiratory droplets and aerosols.  Creative participants should try to position themselves side-to-side, rather than face-to-face where artistically feasible.  Covid volunteers to be mindful of young people on the protest (if present), and engage with parents/carers to promote infection control measures. | Everyone – we are all crew!  Steward volunteers to monitor transmission minimisation measures and remind/help participants to adhere to them  Creative participants | Ongoing |  |
| **Getting or spreading coronavirus through participants from different households travelling together in cars, or on public transport.** | Participants travelling to the protest may become infected by exposure to the virus from a fellow traveller, either on public transport or in private vehicles. | Participants are encouraged to observe guidelines and protocols around hand washing/sanitising and respiratory hygiene.  Parents/carers to help children and young people (if present) with infection control measures.  Encourage participants to adhere to the Government’s general guidance as set out on page 1 | Encourage participants to use face coverings when in private transport and keep vehicles well ventilated.  Wear a face covering when using public transport (which is a legal requirement at present).  Encourage participants to carry hand sanitiser with them and use frequently.  Encourage participants to sit side-to-side, rather than face-to-face, if recommended physical distancing measures are not achievable. | Everyone – we are all crew!  Pre-protest communications folk.  Parents/carers. | Ongoing |  |
| **Contracting or spreading the virus by not physical distancing.**  Whilst at a protest site or on a protest march, physical distancing guidelines are not strictly adhered to. | Participants, the general public or emergency service staff may become infected by being too close to a person who is infected, and contracting the virus either through direct (respiratory droplets or aerosols) or indirect (contaminated surfaces, including hands) transmission routes. | Participants to be encouraged/reminded to observe physical distancing guidelines at regular intervals, by Covid volunteers and fellow participants.  Encourage participants to use the double arm reach technique if in doubt about distances.  Participants to be encouraged/reminded to use a face covering, so as to reinforce the message.  Parents/carers and stewards to help/remind children and young people, if present, to practice physical distancing.  Covid volunteers to monitor transmission minimisation measures and remind/help participants to adhere to them.  Encourage participants to adhere to the Government’s general guidance as set out on page 1 | Participants to be encouraged to stand or sit side by side, rather than face to face, if recommended physical distancing is not feasible.  Where participants are being addressed by a speaker or announcer, a public address system should be used where possible, with speakers situated at intervals so as to enable participants to hear without bunching up, either around the person speaking, or around a speaker for the amplified sound.  Covid volunteers to monitor the numbers in a space and make sure it does not become overfilled – direct participants to alternative locations.  Covid volunteers to ensure that sufficient space is available for the passage of pedestrians. | Everyone – we are all crew!  Steward volunteers to monitor transmission minimisation measures and remind/help participants to adhere to them  Parents/carers | Ongoing |  |
| **Contracting or spreading the virus via contaminated surfaces (e.g. microphones, speakers, other protest related equipment).**  Whilst at a protest surfaces become contaminated with the virus and are touched. | Participants, the general public or emergency services staff, could contract the virus via a contaminated surface. | Participants are encouraged to regularly wipe down surfaces likely to be touched, with an appropriate surface cleaner or wipe (ordinary domestic products can be used).  Where leaflets or other information materials are to be handed directly to the public, hands should be regularly sanitised.  Volunteers to monitor transmission minimisation measures and remind/help participants to adhere to them.  Encourage participants to adhere to the Government’s general guidance as set out on page 1 | Regular surface cleaning during the protest will minimise the chances of infection transmission.  Parents/carers, assisted by Covid volunteers, to encourage children and young people (if present) not to touch surfaces where possible, and if this happens, to practice hand hygiene and clean touched surfaces afterwards. | Everyone – we are all crew!  Steward volunteers to monitor transmission minimisation measures and remind/help participants to adhere to them  Parents/carers | Ongoing |  |